



Upper Delaware Council

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UDC Opposes NYRI Power Line

HANCOCK – The Upper Delaware Council, Inc. (UDC) delivered testimony at a November 5 public hearing convened by the New York State Department of Public Service in Hancock to gather input on the application by New York Regional Interconnect, Inc. (NYRI) to construct a high voltage direct current transmission line on a 190-mile path between Marcy and Rock Tavern, NY.

The New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) will determine by August of 2009 whether to grant NYRI a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for its proposed \$2.1 billion power line.

The two Administrative Law Judges assigned to the case, Jeffrey Stockholm and Michelle Phillips, agreed to hold 13 public information forums between October 20 and November 6 in the seven New York State counties affected by the proposed route to personally hear statements and create a record for their review.

The UDC was represented at three of the hearings which took place on Oct. 29 at the Delaware Community Center in Callicoon and Sullivan West Central High School in Lake Huntington, and on Nov. 5 at Hancock Central School in Hancock.

In Hancock, UDC Executive Director Bill Douglass gave the following statement detailing the Upper Delaware Council's opposition to the NYRI proposal:

“The UDC is a non-profit organization incorporated in 1988 which works in partnership with the National Park Service to oversee the coordinated implementation of the River Management Plan for the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System since 1978. Our voting members are 12 local governments which border on the Upper Delaware River and the two states of New York and Pennsylvania. The Delaware River Basin Commission is a non-voting member.

“The Upper Delaware Council's core mission is to uphold the River Management Plan. This document was finalized in 1986 and subsequently approved by the U.S. Department of the Interior and both states to provide guidelines for the protection of the 55,575-acre river valley from any encroachments that could threaten

Working together to conserve the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River

*Town of Hancock • Town of Fremont • Town of Delaware • Town of Cohecton • Town of Tusten • Town of Highland • Town of Lumberland
Town of Deerpark • Damascus Township • Lackawaxen Township • Shohola Township • Westfall Township • State of New York • Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
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the scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, and cultural values that the U.S. Congress recognized in its designation of the 73.4-mile river corridor from Hancock, NY to Mill Rift, PA.

“Page 134 of the River Management Plan states that new, major electric lines with a design capacity of 125 kilovolts or greater and extending a distance of ten miles or more in length are an “incompatible use” anywhere in the river corridor.

“New York Regional Interconnection’s proposed 400 kilovolt direct current transmission line – whether located along the Millennium Gas Pipeline route as primarily nominated or along the railroad right-of-way alternate route as proposed by NYRI’s predecessor Pegasus Power Systems, Inc. in October of 2003 – constitutes what the River Management Plan defines as a “clear and direct threat” to the river corridor.

“The Upper Delaware Council strongly believes that this project not only violates the objectives of the River Management Plan and the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, but it also jeopardizes our local economy through a potential loss of property values and tourism industry revenues. A line of overhead transmission towers would dramatically and permanently scar the natural, scenic quality that makes the Upper Delaware Valley so special to our residents and approximately 250,000 annual visitors.

“In addition to hosting a valued unit of the National Park System, our river valley region is home to numerous threatened and endangered plant and animal species. It is a world-class trout fishery and is recognized by the Audubon Society as an Important Bird Area. Portions of Route 97 have been designated by New York State as the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway and Bike Route 17. The Hawk’s Nest section of the highway in Orange County is famous for its sweeping vistas of the river below. The area contributes three sites to the New York State Revolutionary War Heritage Trail and lays claim to numerous historic districts. A thriving arts community exists as well.

“On May 4, 2006, the Upper Delaware Council unanimously approved a resolution opposing NYRI’s original Article VII application to the Public Service Commission. Our position has not changed over the ensuing 27 months that it took this company to complete the application requirements.

“The UDC also opposes NYRI’s request to the Public Service Commission and local communities for waivers from a majority of the environmental analyses that are critical to a thorough evaluation.

“We strongly denounce this private company’s potential use of eminent domain to acquire private property to develop this power line.

“For the record, the Council also objects to the U.S. Department of Energy’s decision to include the Upper Delaware region within the Mid-Atlantic Area National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor designation and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission’s awarding of financial incentives to NYRI for the siting of this unnecessary project along any of the potential routes.

“We are enheartened by the unprecedented network of communities, elected officials on all governmental levels, citizen activist groups, business associations, environmental organizations, and outraged individuals that have joined forces to fight this proposed transmission line. We hope that, at the end of the review process, the New York State Public Service Commission will deny NYRI’s application.”

NYRI’s application may be viewed at local libraries in municipalities along the route or on-line at www.nyri.us. Archival webcasts of all 13 public statement hearings are available for viewing at www.newyorkadmin.com/cgi-bin/nypsc.cgi.

Comments are still being accepted for “Case 06-T-0650 – NYRI Transmission Line Proceeding” by writing to: Jaclyn A. Brillling, Secretary, Public Service Commission, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223-1350; calling the PSC 24-Hour Opinion Line at 800-335-2120; or submitting an on-line form through the websites at www.AskPSC.com or www.dps.state.ny.us,

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